WINTER SCENES

four songs on texts of D.G. Jones

(1997)

Karim Al-Zand

for mezzo-soprano,
harp, flute and viola

PROGRAM NOTE:

The four poems in this short cycle are by the Canadian poet D. G. Jones. They come from diverse collections, but are united by a common theme: winter. They are arranged in a chronological or 'seasonal' order, beginning with the cold of deep winter in *February*, to the rejuvenation of spring in *Thaw*. In each poem, the overall meaning hinges on the last lines, even the last word. They have a kind of 'upward' turn at their ends, an optimistic revelation.

Winter Scenes was commissioned to be presented to an audience of novice music students. Thus the songs were meant, in part, to illustrate various musical constructions: a passacaglia (*February*); a canon by inversion (*Winter Hills*); a melodic palindrome (*View From My Window*); the use of modes (*Thaw*).

Dana Al-Zand. November 1997

Premiere performance: *Winter Scenes* was written in fulfillment of a commission from the Fromm Foundation at Harvard University and Harvard's CORE curriculum course B-51: 'First Nights.' It was premiered on December 16 in Sanders Theatre at Harvard University for that class. The performers were Jacqueline Zander (mezzo-soprano), Virginia Crumb (harp), Susan Gall-Hampton (flute), Scott Woolweaver (viola).

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

The flutist doubles on alto flute in songs I. and III. This is a transposed score: the alto flute sounds a fourth lower than written; harp harmonics sound an octave higher than written. Accidentals apply throughout the measure in their own octave. Cautionary accidentals do not imply a relaxation of this rule. The lowest two strings of the harp are tuned to C♯ and D♭.

The range of the mezzo-soprano part:

DURATION:

I. February	4' 30"
II. Winter Hills	2' 00"
III. View From My Window	1' 00"
IV. Thaw	3' 30"
TOTAL	11' 00"

TEXT:

I. February

The February night refines the air
That all these empty corridors
Of stony city walls now biting wear
Like polished steel from a cold forge.
And men are deeply moled within those walls
To hibernate in their own heat;
Outside their windows the high moonlight falls
To bear against the tempered glass.
Small blades of snow curl round a lamp below,
A coal-black tree now crack a joint,
And the tall air like a frozen bow
Draws its arc across the sky.

Yet in one night of rotting snow, the shaft
And bow will crumble unreleased,
And all these windows open to a draught
Of singing spring and its relief.

II. Winter Hills

The grey hills, like whales,
Journey in the winter sea;

I hardly know if I'm alive,
Or shall ever love again -

Unless I journey with the whales
To where the hills rise up: green.

III. View From My Window

The hillside has been hidden
And the stones
Come up out of the snow
Like flowers.

IV. Thaw

When the snow melts to the ground
leaving between hillocks of snow
many little pools where
green grass and dead leaves grow,
the currents which run from pool down to pool
are too slight to be seen,
yet they ripple the pools as though
all earth were trembling in its frame.

D. G. Jones

February, *Winter Hills,* and *Thaw* from Frost on the Sun, Contact Press, Toronto, 1957, *View from My Window* from Phrases from Orpheus, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1967.

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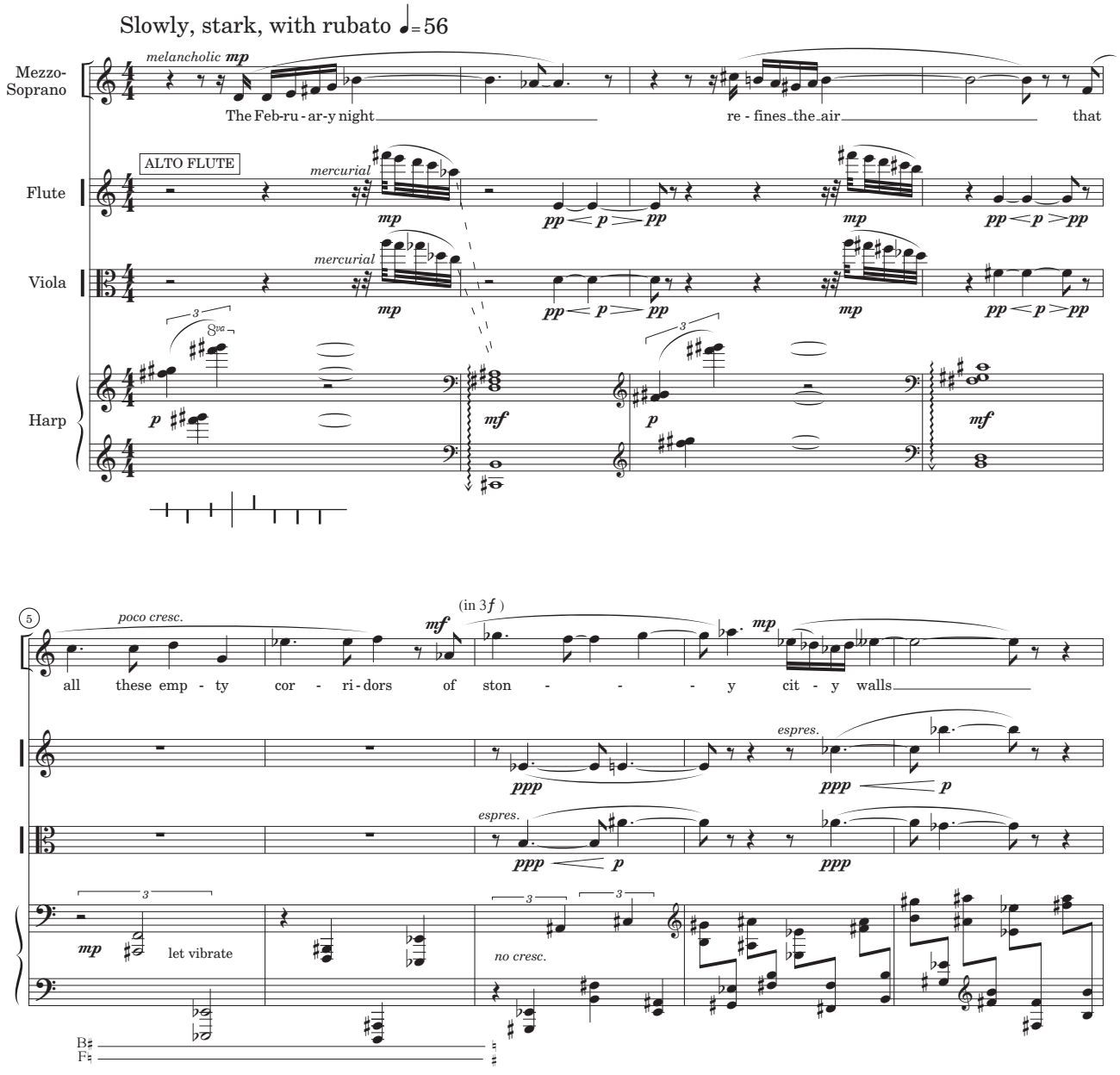
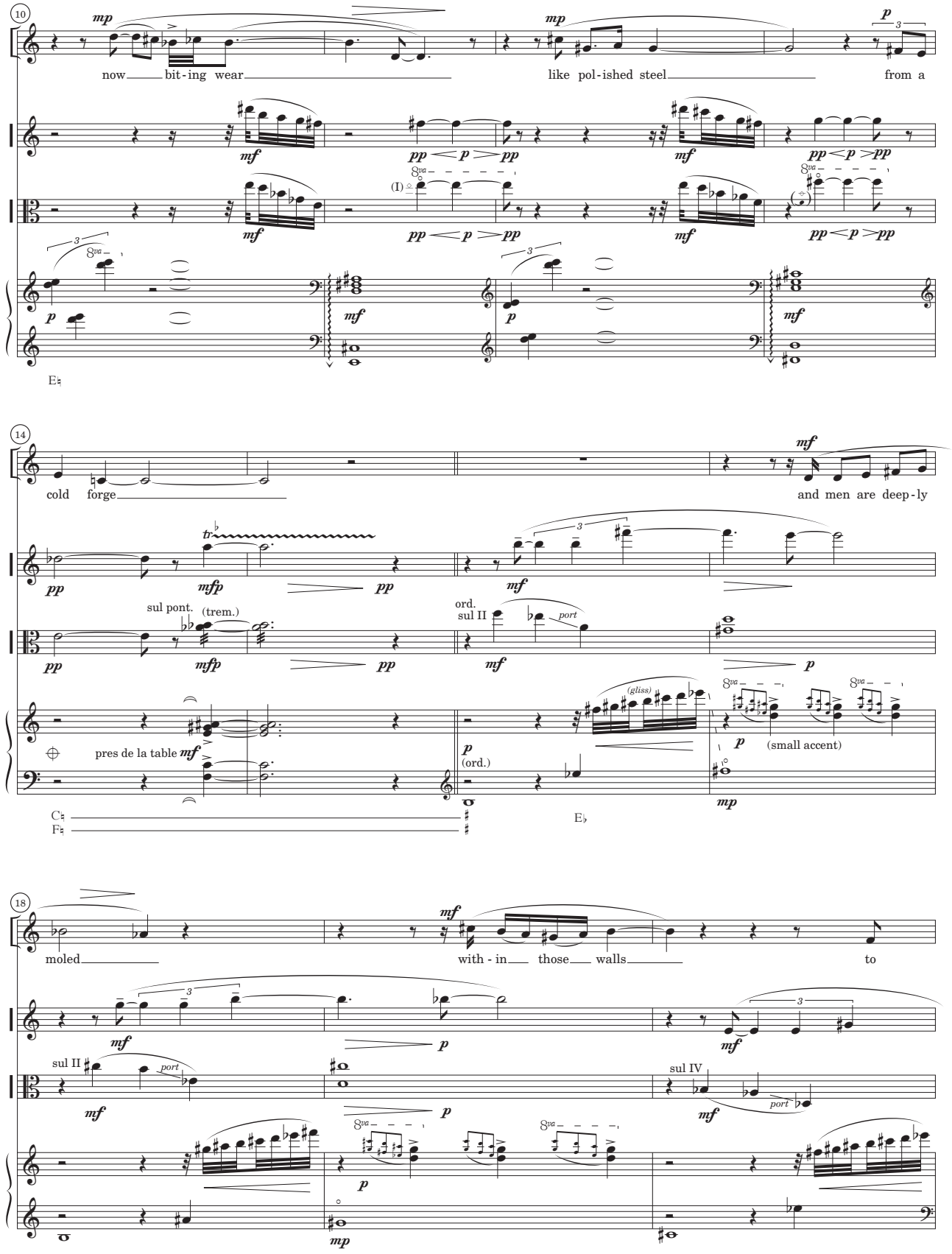
WINTER SCENES

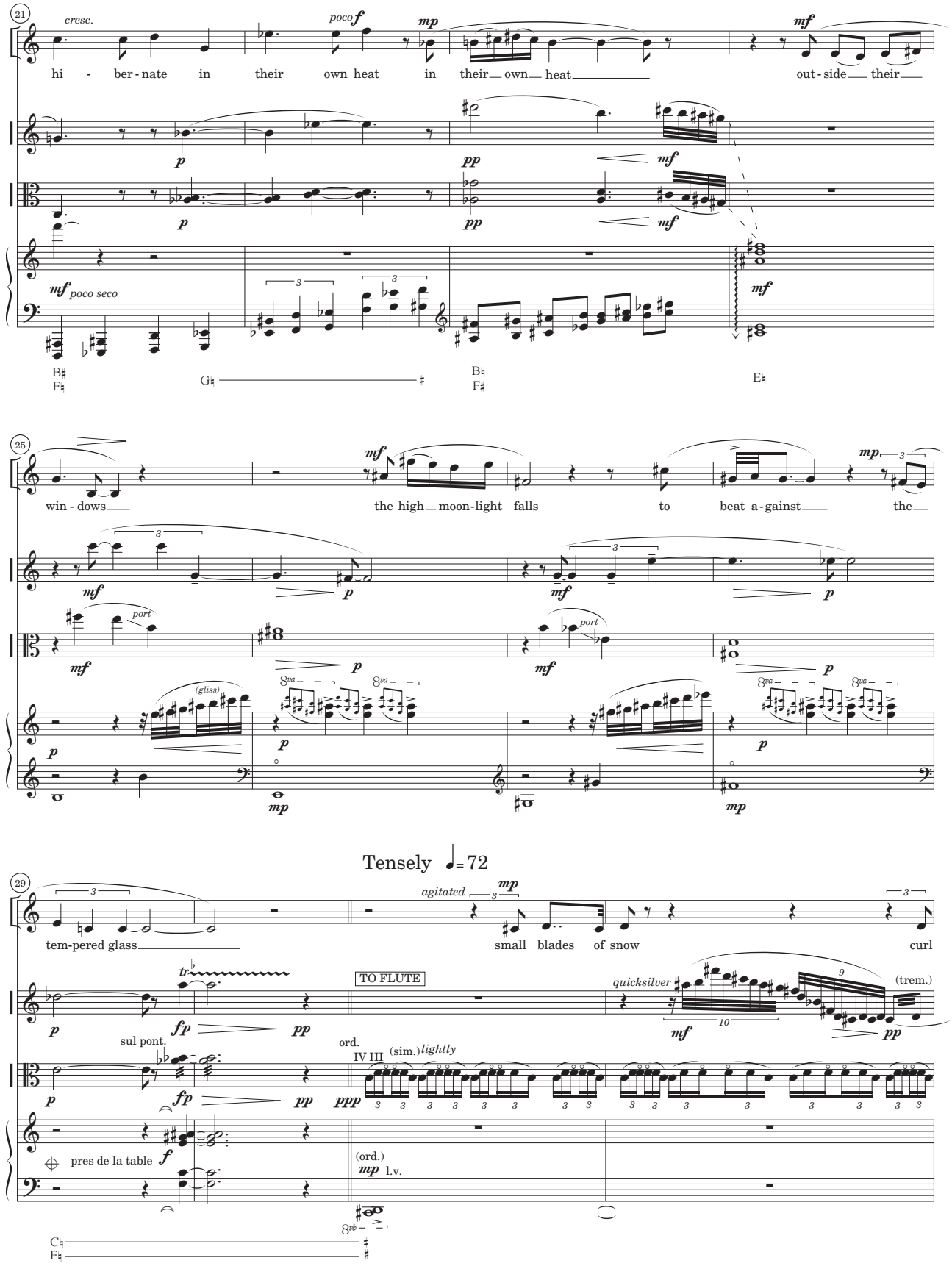
Four songs on texts of D.G. Jones

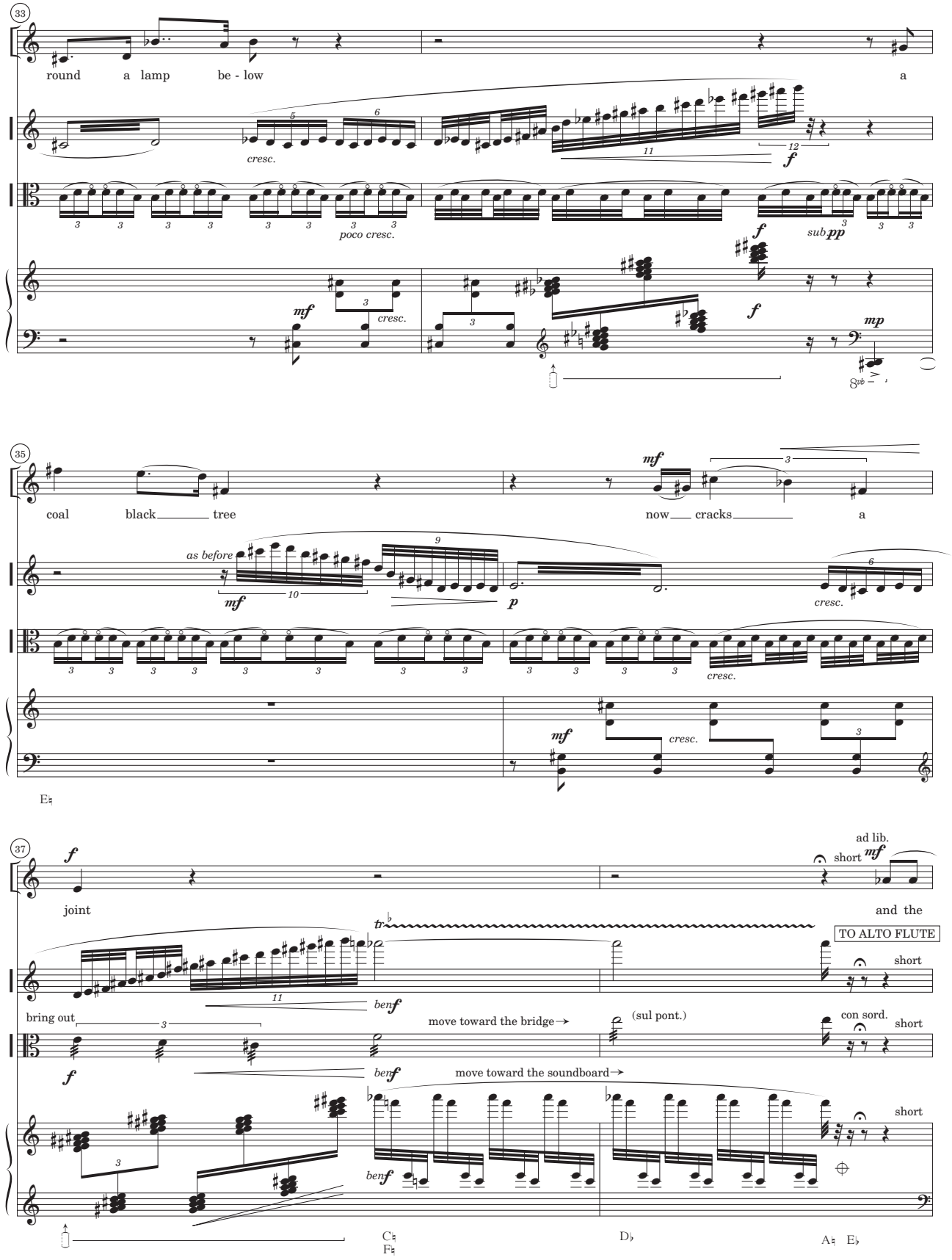
Karim Al-Zand
(1997)

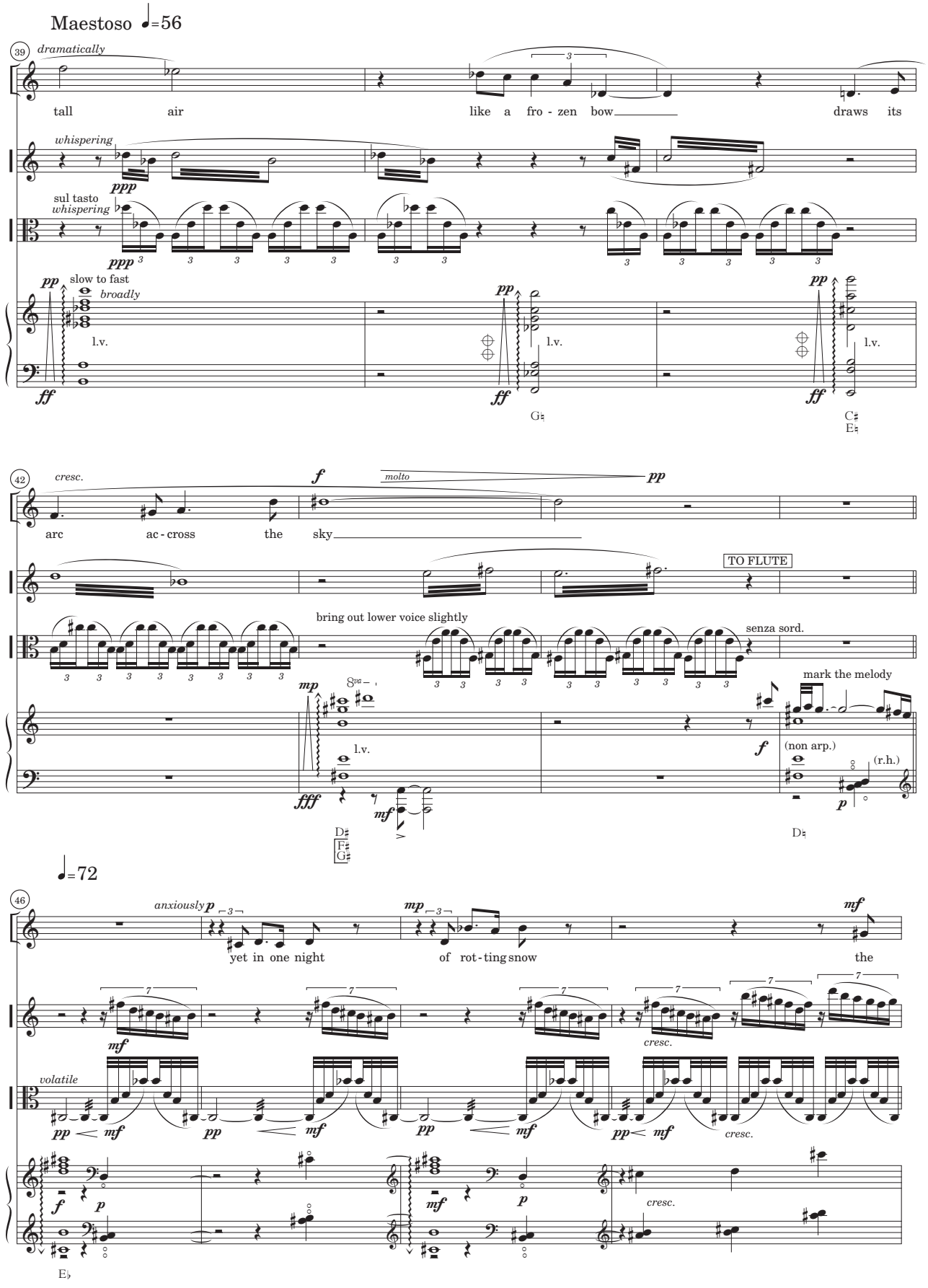
I. February

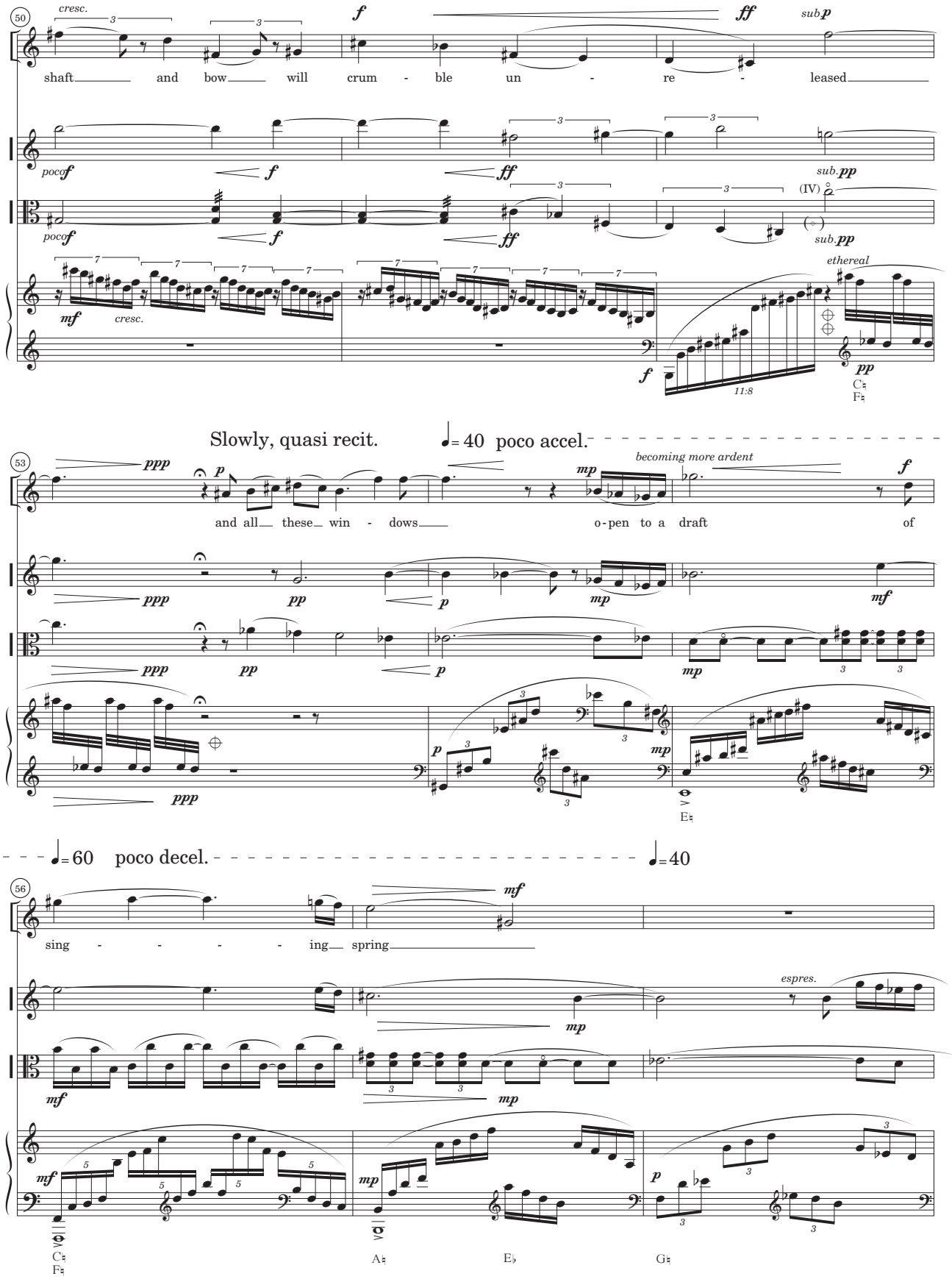


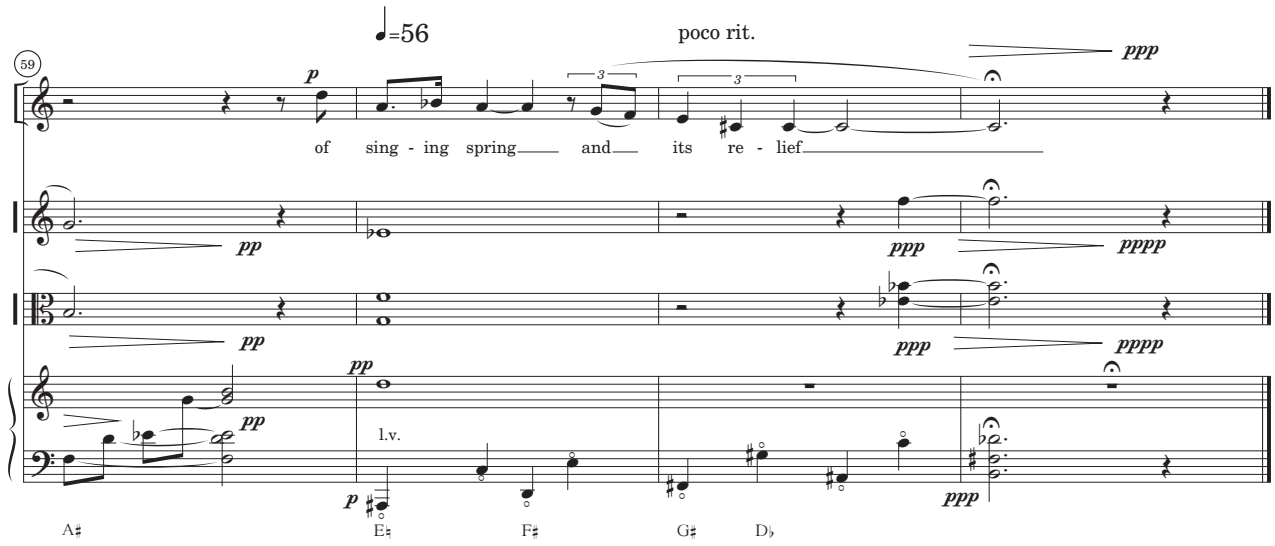

10
mp
now bit-ing wear
mp
like pol-ished steel
p
from a
mf
pp < p > pp
(I)
8va
3
E♮
14
cold forge
mf
and men are deep-ly
tr
mfp
pp
sul pont.
(trem.)
ord.
sul II
port
(gliss)
pres de la table
(ord.)
(small accent)
C♮
F♮
E♭
18
moled
with-in those walls
to
sul IV


21
cresc.
poco f
mp
mf
hi - ber - nate in their own heat in their own heat out - side their
p
pp
mf
mf poco seco
mf
B♯ F♯
G♯
B♯ F♯
E♯
25
win - dows the high moon-light falls to beat a-gainst the
mf
p
port
(gliss)
8va
mp
29
Tensely ♩= 72
agitated
mp
tem-pered glass
small blades of snow curl
TO FLUTE
quicksilver
(trem.)
tr
fp
pp
mf
sul pont.
ord.
IV III
(sim.) lightly
ppp
pres de la table
f
(ord.)
mp l.v.
8vb
C♯ F♯

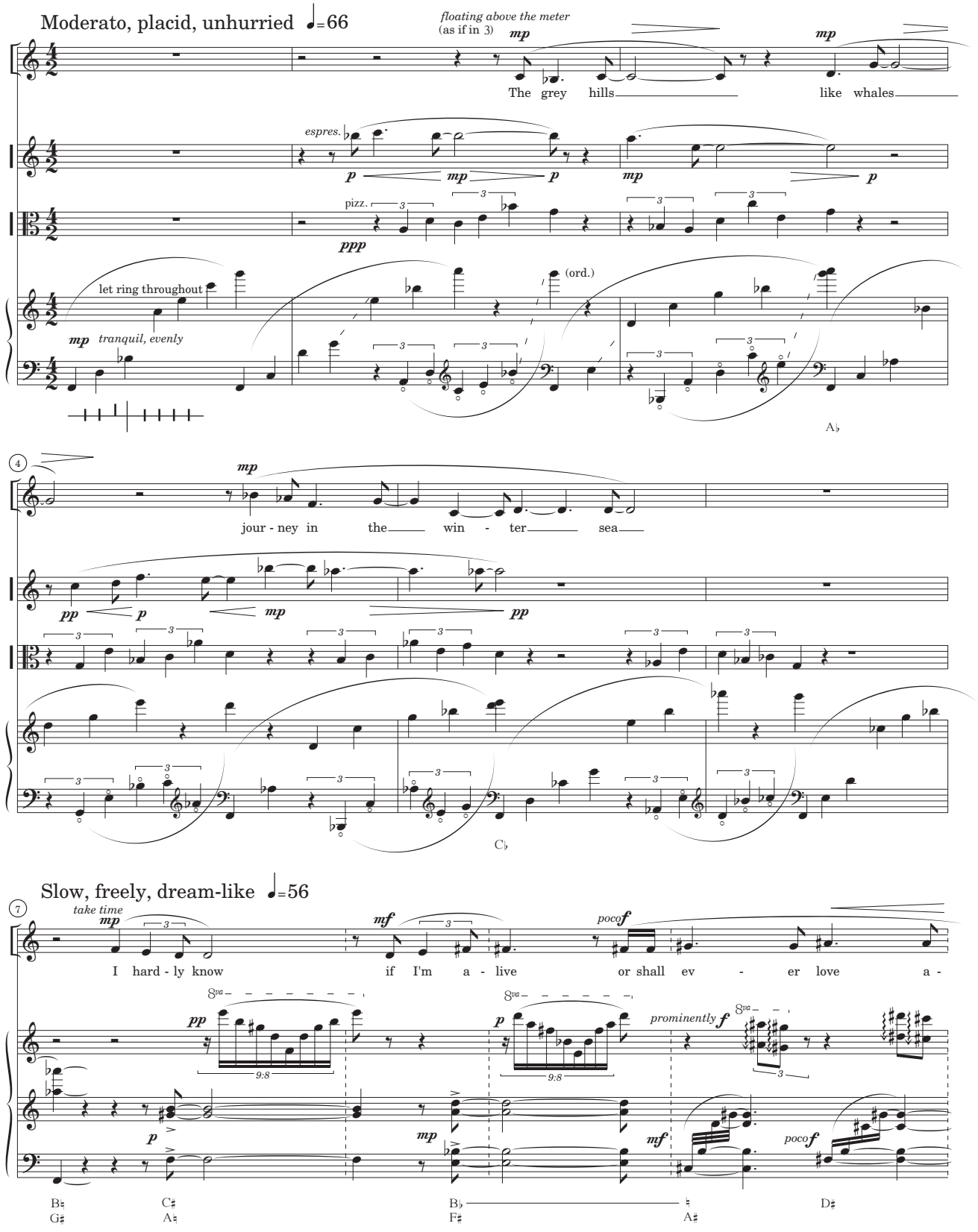

33
round a lamp be - low
a
cresc.
poco cresc.
sub pp
35
coal black tree
now cracks a
as before
cresc.
E♮
37
joint
and the
ad lib.
short
TO ALTO FLUTE
bring out
move toward the bridge→
(sul pont.)
con sord.
move toward the soundboard→
C♮
F♮
D♭
A♮ E♭

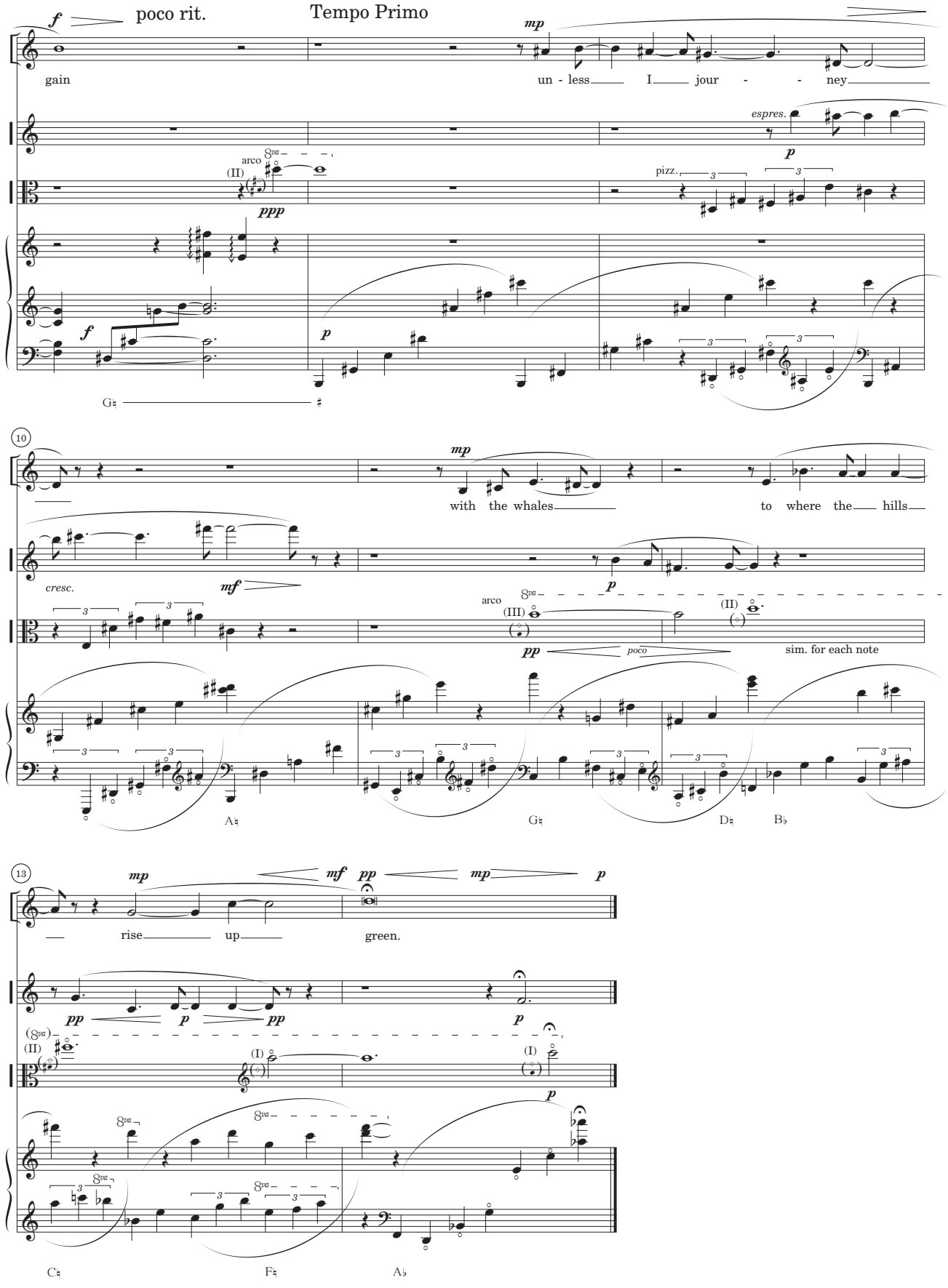

Maestoso ♩=56
39
dramatically
tall air like a fro - zen bow draws its
whispering
ppp
sul tasto
whispering
ppp
pp
slow to fast
broadly
l.v.
ff
pp
l.v.
ff
G♯
pp
l.v.
ff
C♯
E♯
42
cresc.
f
molto
pp
arc ac - cross the sky
TO FLUTE
bring out lower voice slightly
senza sord.
mp
8va
l.v.
fff
mf
D♯
F♯
G♯
mark the melody
f
(non arp.)
(r.h.)
p
D♯
♩=72
46
anxiously p
mp
mf
yet in one night of rot - ting snow the
mf
cresc.
volatile
pp
mf
pp
mf
pp
mf
pp
mf
cresc.
f
p
mf
p
cresc.
E♭


50
cresc.
f
ff
sub p
shaft and bow will crum - ble un - re - leased
poco f
f
ff
sub. pp
(IV)
poco f
f
ff
sub. pp
ethereal
mf
cresc.
f
11:8
pp
C♮
F♮
Slowly, quasi recit.
♩= 40 poco accel.
53
ppp
p
becoming more ardent
mp
f
and all these win - dows o - pen to a draft of
ppp
pp
p
mp
mf
ppp
pp
p
mp
ppp
p
mp
E♮
♩= 60 poco decel.
♩= 40
56
mf
sing - - - - ing spring
espres.
mp
mf
mp
mf
mp
p
C♮
F♮
A♮
E♭
G♮

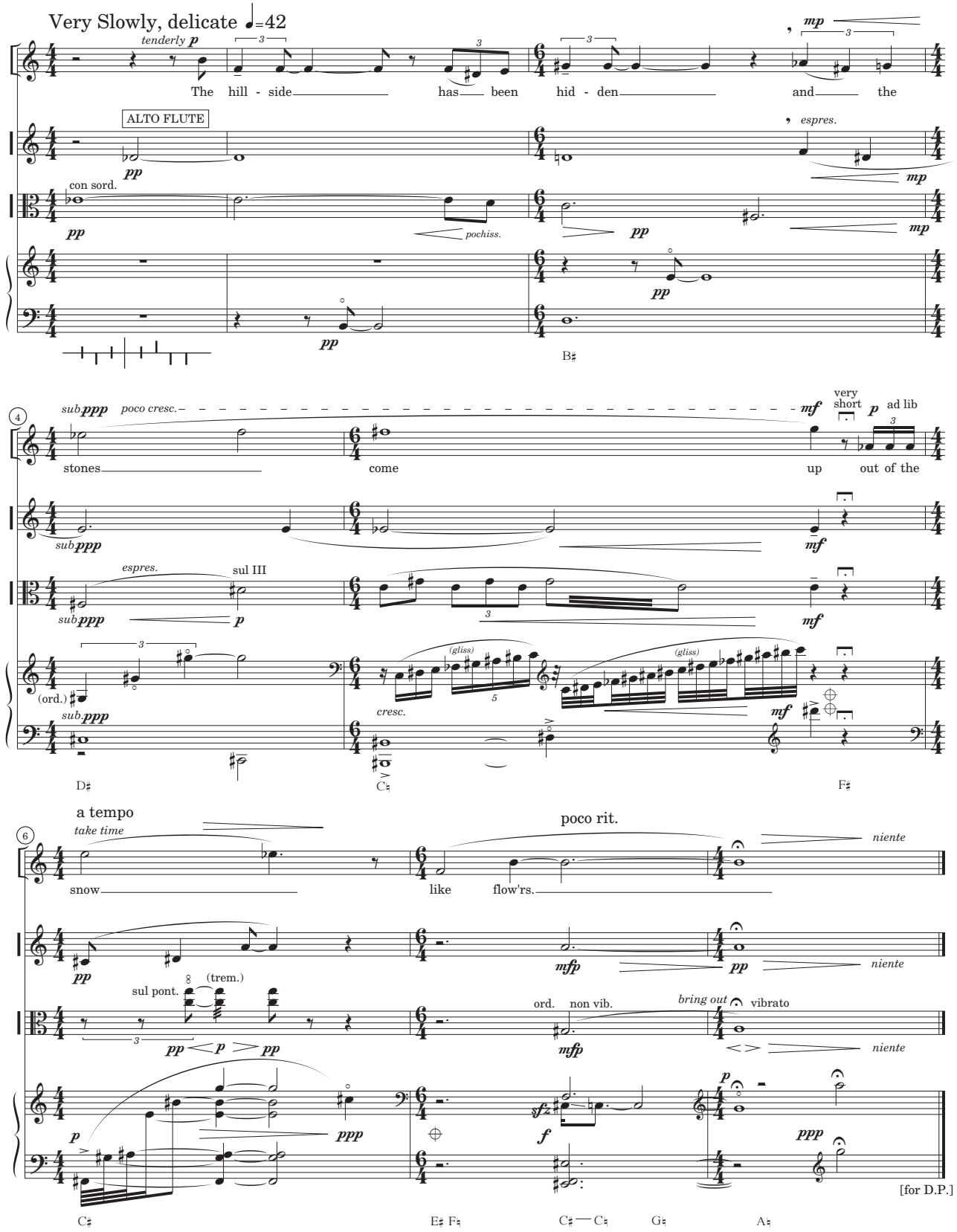

♩=56
poco rit.
59
p
ppp
of sing - ing spring and its re - lief
pp
ppp
pppp
pp
ppp
pppp
pp
pp
l.v.
p
ppp
A♯
E♯
F♯
G♯
D♭

II. Winter Hills

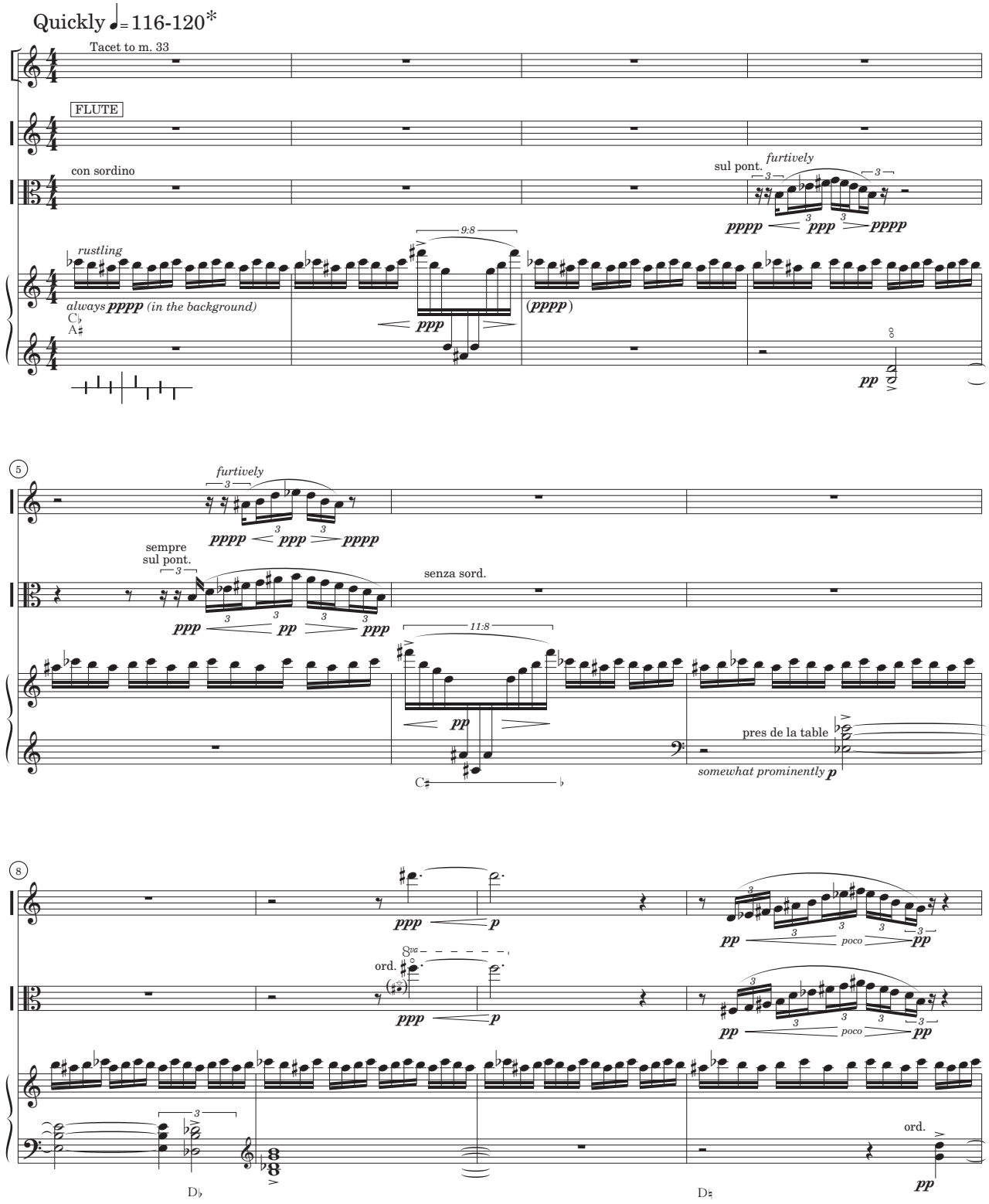



f
poco rit.
Tempo Primo
mp
gain
un - less I jour - - ney
espres.
p
arco
8va
(II)
ppp
pizz.
3
f
p
G♮
10
mp
with the whales
to where the hills
cresc.
mf
p
arco
8va
(III)
(II)
pp
poco
sim. for each note
A♮
G♮
D♮
B♭
13
mp
mf
pp
mp
p
rise up
green.
pp
p
pp
p
(8va)
(II)
(I)
(I)
p
8va
C♮
F♮
A♭

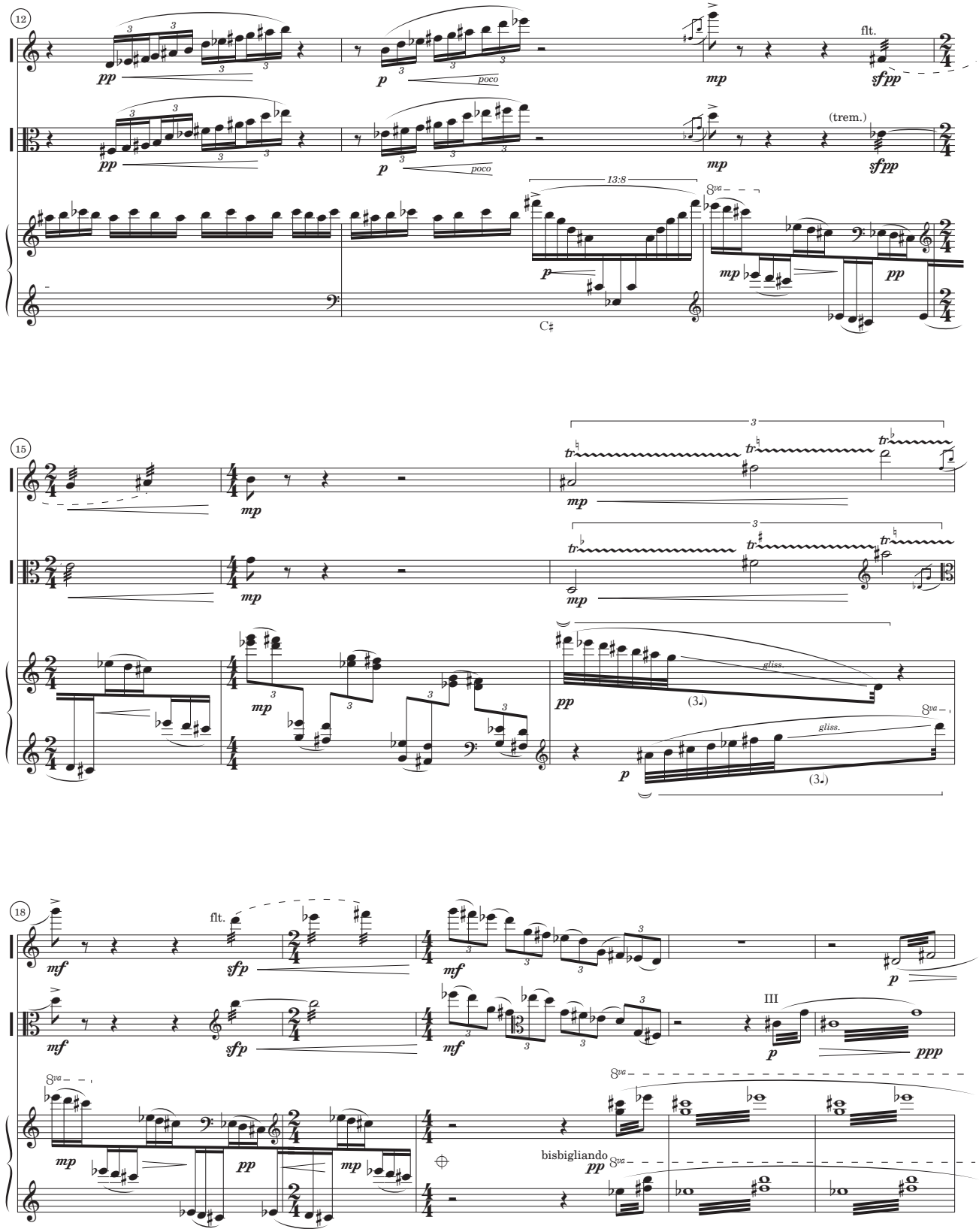
III. View From My Window

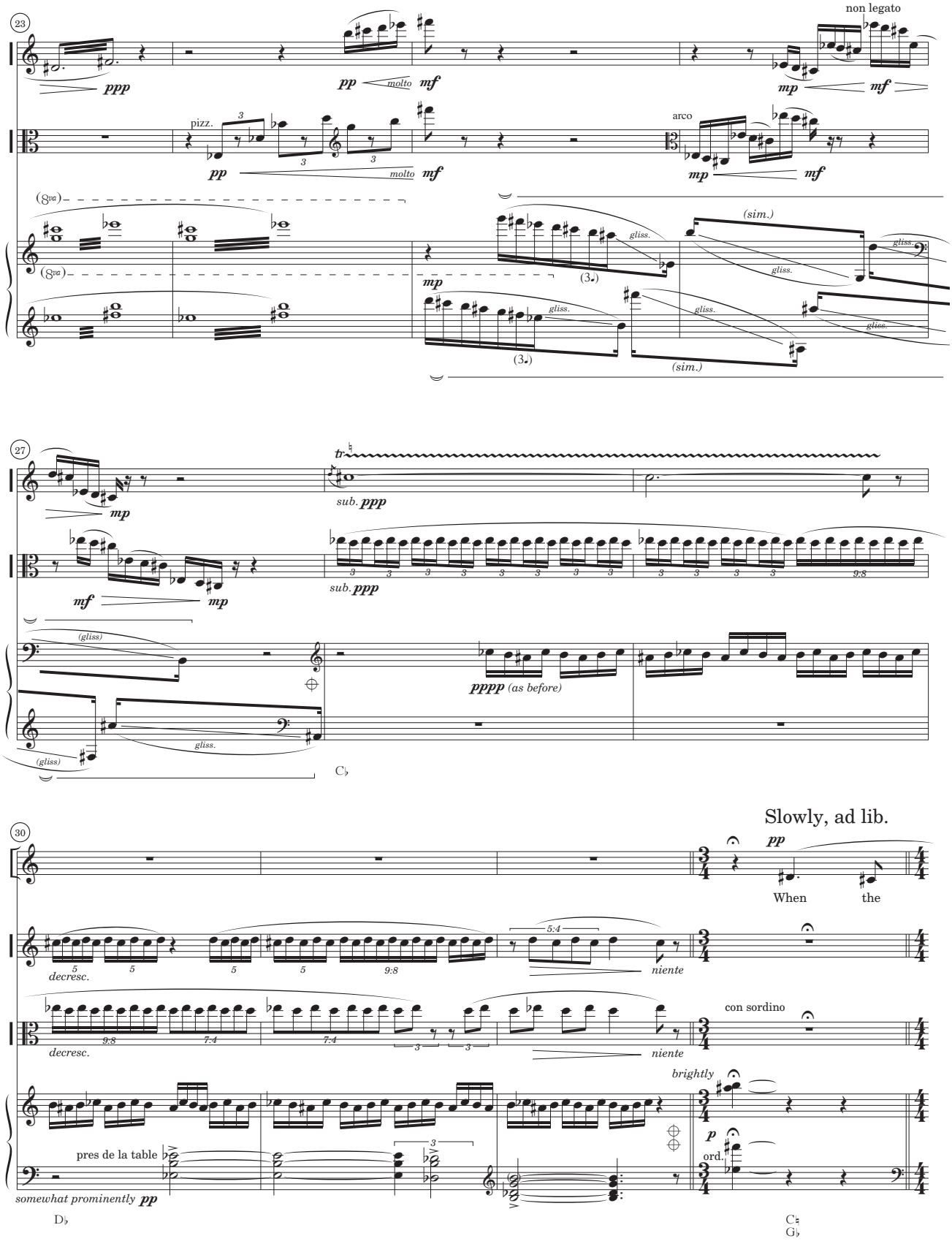


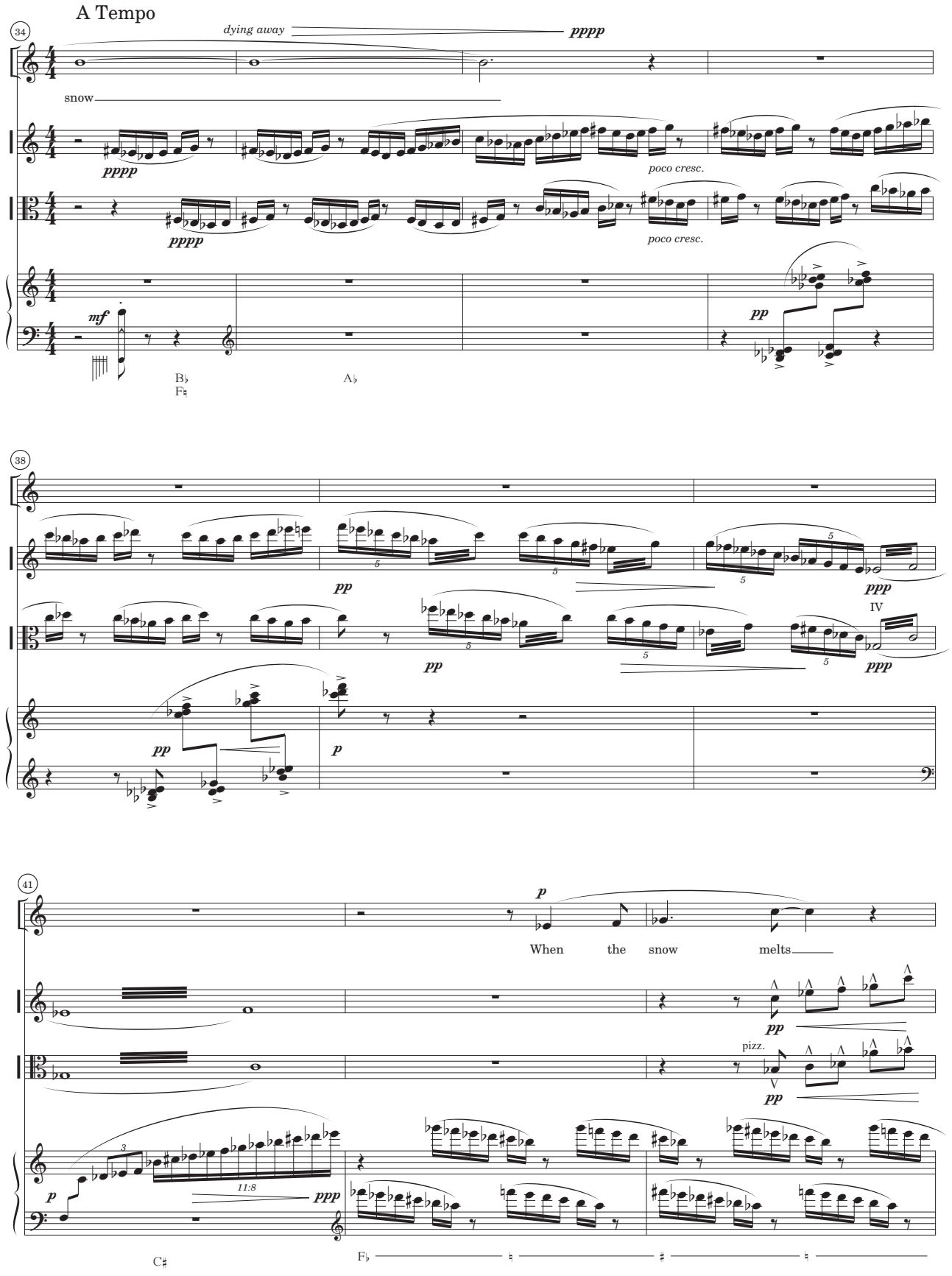
IV. Thaw

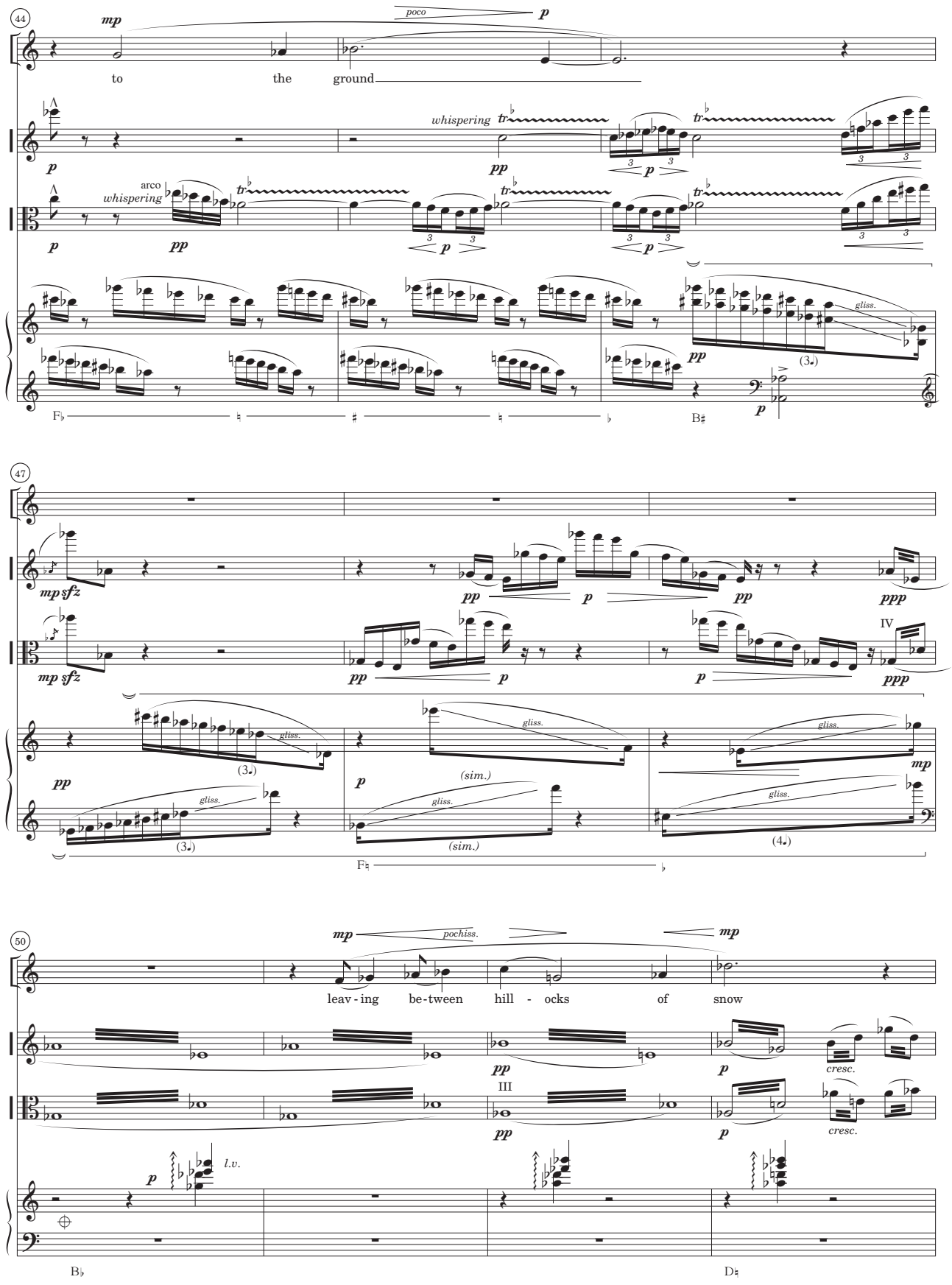


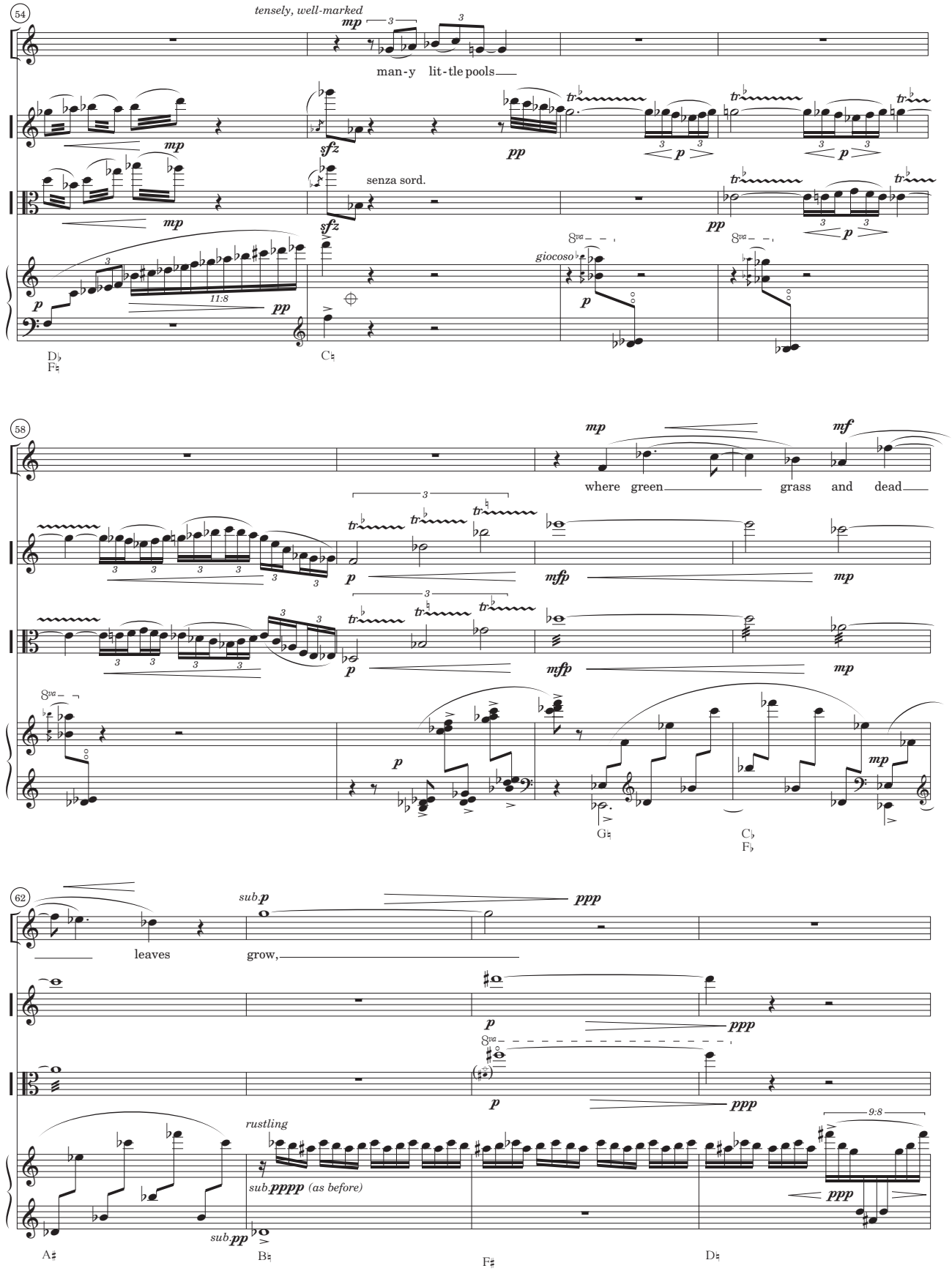
* N.B.: This song is to be played quietly throughout. Dynamics are relative to the ***ff*** climax in m. 92 --which still should not be too loud.

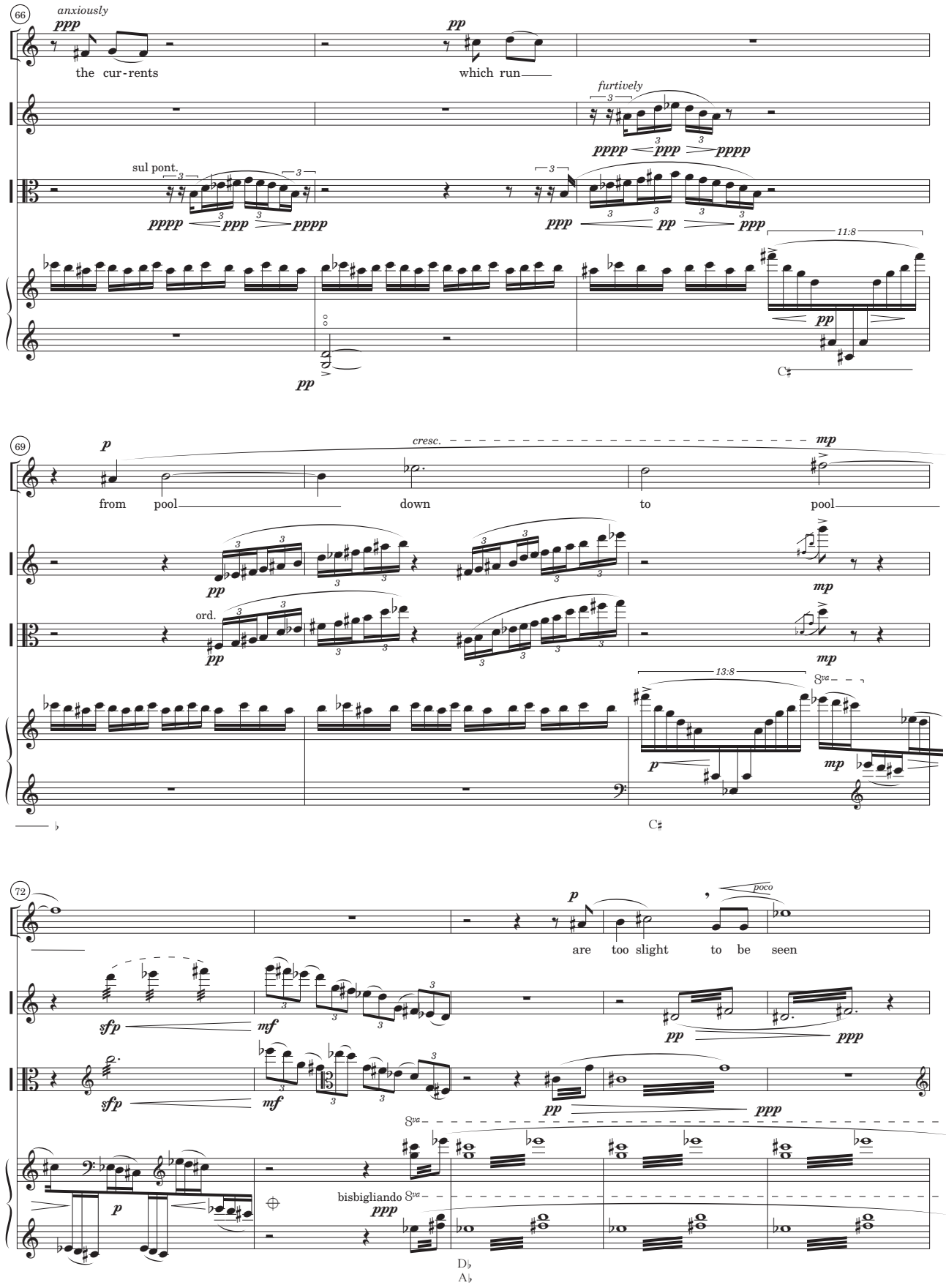

12
pp
poco
p
mp
flt.
sfpp
(trem.)
13:8
8va
C♯
15
gliss.
(3.)
18
sfp
III
ppp
bisbigliando

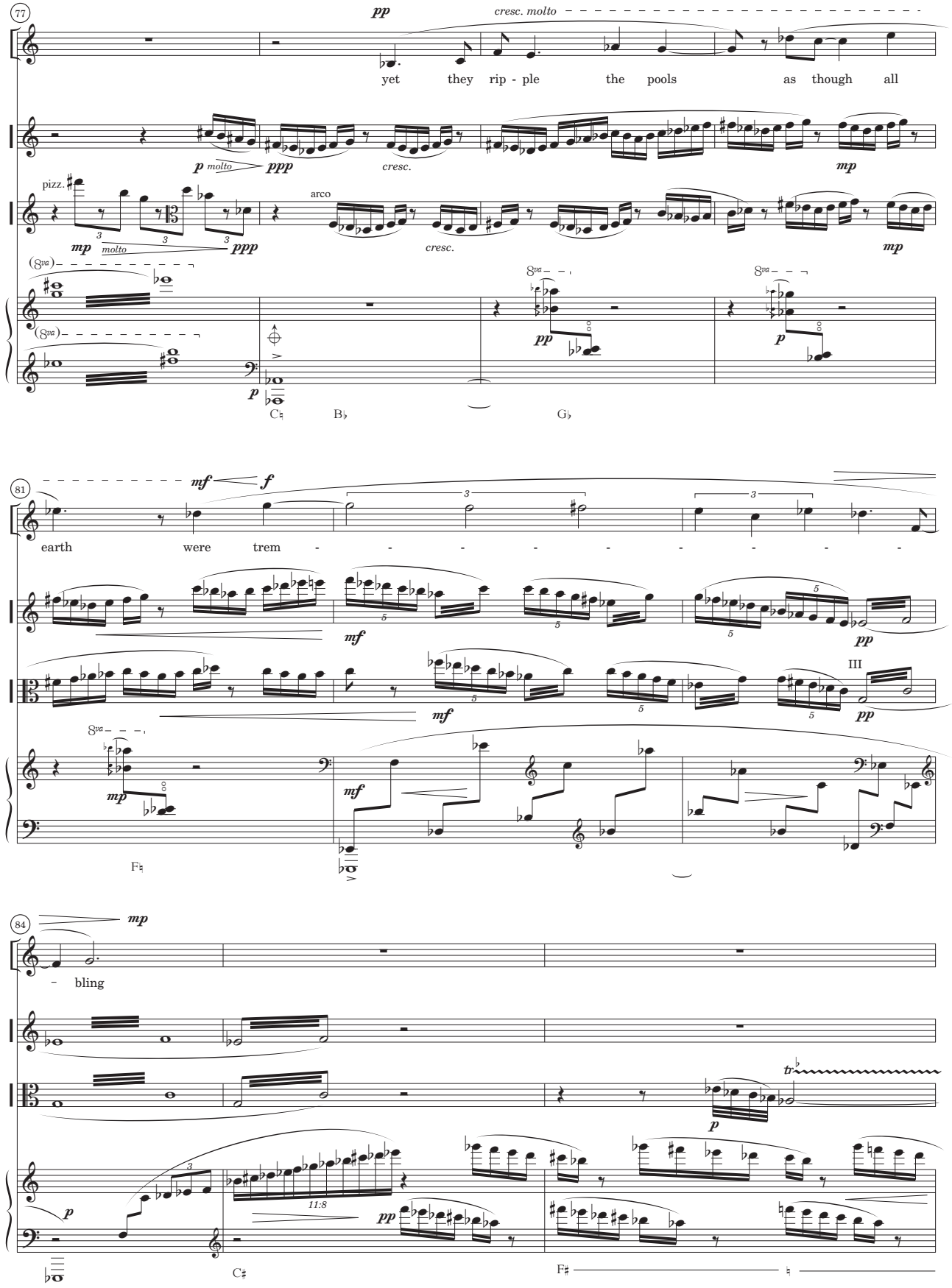

23
non legato
ppp
pp molto mf
mp mf
pizz.
arco
(8va)
gliss.
(sim.)
27
tr
sub. ppp
mf mp
(gliss)
pppp (as before)
C♭
30
Slowly, ad lib.
When the
decresc.
niente
con sordino
brightly
pres de la table
somewhat prominently pp
ord.
D♭
C♮
G♭

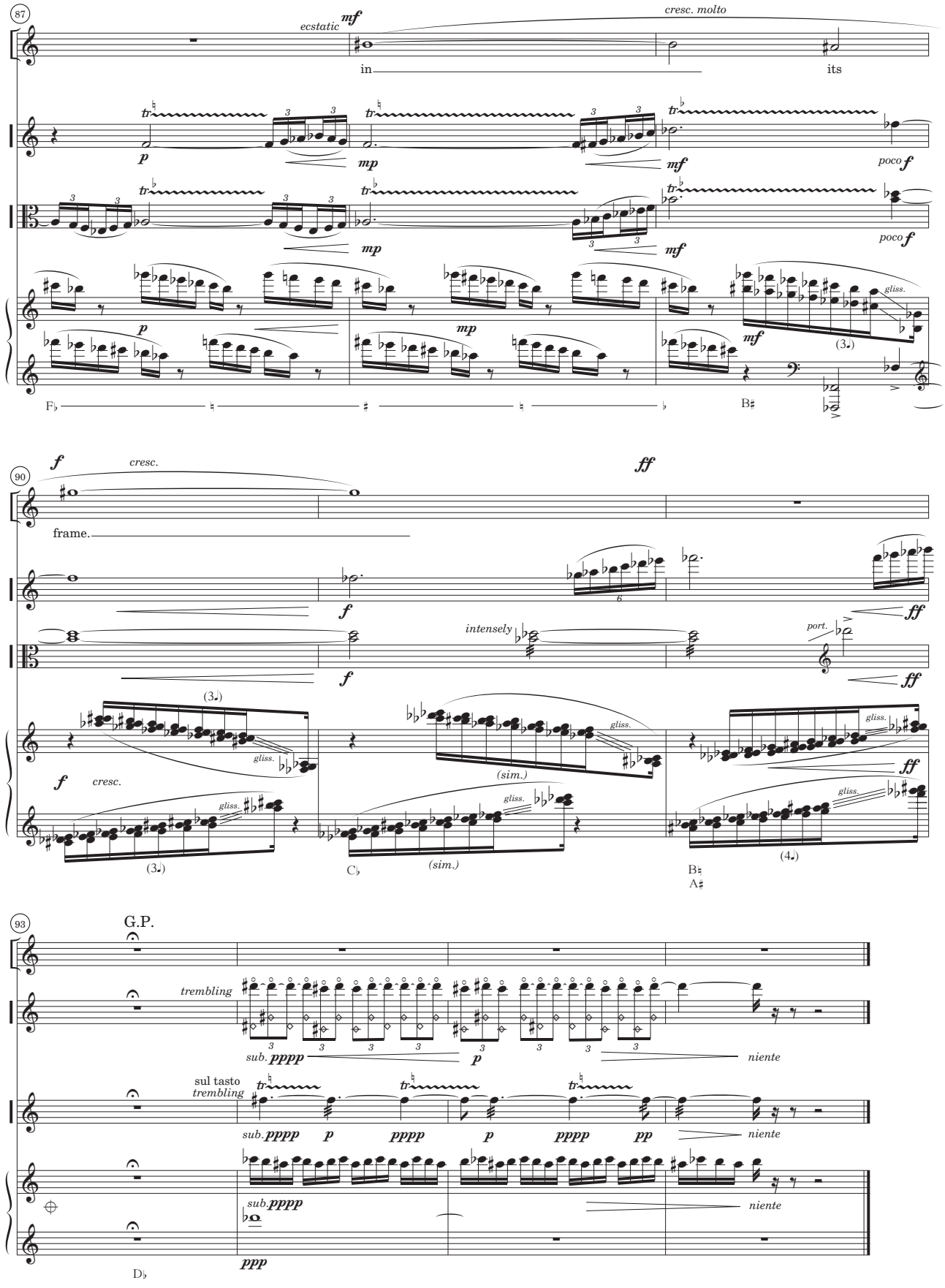

A Tempo
34
dying away
pppp
snow
pppp
poco cresc.
pppp
poco cresc.
mf
pp
B♭
F♯
A♭
38
pp
pp
ppp
IV
pp
pp
p
41
p
When the snow melts
pp
pizz.
V
pp
p
3
11:8
ppp
C♯
F♭


44
mp
poco
p
to the ground
whispering
tr
pp
arco
whispering
gliss.
(3.)
F♭
B♯
47
mp sfz
pp
p
ppp
IV
(sim.)
(4.)
F♮
50
mp
pochiss.
leav-ing be-tween hill - ocks of snow
III
cresc.
l.v.
B♭
D♮


54
tensely, well-marked
mp
man-y lit-tle pools
mp
sfz
pp
p
senza sord.
mp
sfz
pp
p
giocoso
p
11:8
pp
D♭
F♮
C♮
58
mp
mf
where green grass and dead
p
mfp
mp
p
mfp
mp
p
mp
G♮
C♭
F♭
62
sub.p
ppp
leaves
grow,
p
ppp
p
ppp
rustling
sub.pppp (as before)
9:8
ppp
sub.pp
A♯
B♮
F♯
D♮


66
anxiously
ppp
the cur-rents
pp
which run
furtively
pppp
ppp
pppp
sul pont.
pppp
ppp
pppp
ppp
pp
ppp
11:8
pp
pp
69
p
cresc.
mp
from pool
down
to
pool
pp
ord.
pp
mp
mp
13:8
8va
p
mp
72
p
poco
are too slight to be seen
sfp
mf
pp
ppp
sfp
mf
pp
ppp
8va
p
bisbigliando 8va
ppp


77
pp
cresc. molto
yet they rip - ple the pools as though all
p molto
ppp
cresc.
mp
pizz.
arco
mp molto
ppp
cresc.
mp
(8va)
8va
pp
p
C♮
B♭
G♭
81
mf
f
earth were trem - - - - - - - - - -
mf
pp
III
mf
pp
8va
mp
mf
F♮
84
mp
- bling
tr
p
p
11:8
pp
C♯
F♯


87
ecstatic
mf
cresc. molto
in
its
p
mp
mf
poco f
gliss.
(3.)
90
f
cresc.
ff
frame.
intensely
port.
(sim.)
(4.)
93
G.P.
trembling
sub. pppp
niente
sul tasto
pp
ppp